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THE
CONTROL OF PUPILS

BY

Sept
ARLAND D. WEEKS

STATE NORMAL SCHOOL, VALLEY CITY, N. D.

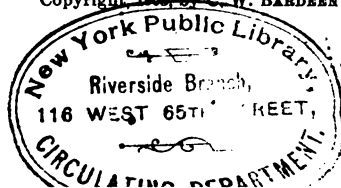


SYRACUSE, N. Y.

C. W. BARDEEN, PUBLISHER

1908

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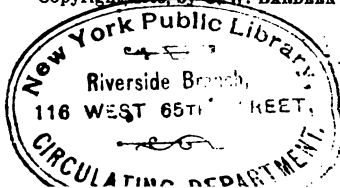


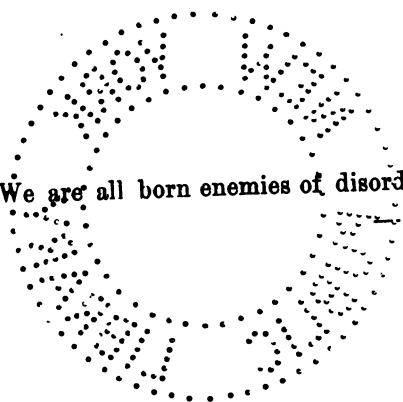
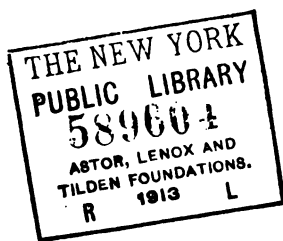
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"We are all born enemies of disorder."

—Carlyle.

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PREFACE

The question of discipline is of great importance generally, but in schools particularly. Mothers and fathers fail in the discipline of infant children; teachers in secondary schools are classed as successful or unsuccessful according to discipline; university professors have been known to lose much in efficiency through inability to maintain order in their classes. Many teachers think they have no questions of discipline; in their case tact and experience have made the work of governing frictionless, but no school controls itself. A skillful driver guides a well-trained horse almost without effort, but he drives. So do teachers that teach. The questions of discipline involve physiology, psychology, sociology, and common sense. Experience teaches expensively. Suggestions teach inexpensively. This is a little book of suggestions with reasons.

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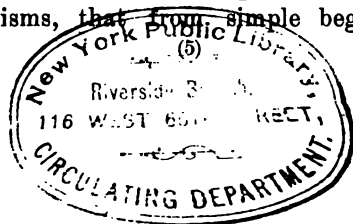
THE CONTROL OF PUPILS

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Some years ago a man named Darwin wrote a book. In this book he announced a theory. That theory shook the world, and the world is still shaking except in the neighborhood of great schools and universities, enlightened editorial sanctums, laboratories and individual scholars, thinkers and respecters of the conclusions of great men of science. Wherever the shaking has subsided, the doctrine of evolution is a gospel of light, a finger pointing to greater glories of human character and achievement.

What is the doctrine of evolution? It is the doctrine that the complex comes from the simple, that greater follows less, that circumstances affect plant and animal organisms, that from simple beginnings



have developed and multiplied all forms of life. It is the doctrine that the world came from star dust and man from earth dust, the doctrine that man came up through lower forms of life and that he is subject to still further modification. Evolution frankly says that in remote ages the ancestors of man were lower animals.

It is surprising that this theory as applied to man should ever have been questioned, inasmuch as some of these lower animals, concededly like our ancestors, have existed in large numbers in historic times—still exist. Many of them were found living in America at its discovery. Many have been found in the South Sea islands. At one time many lived in the British Islands. In the time of the Roman Empire large numbers of them dwelt in the wilderness to the north. Henry Wirz, the keeper of Andersonville prison, was one. I speak of the lower animals called savages. By an infinite number of narrow gradations human life leads back from man at his present stage of development to man in the low crudeness of his obscure making.

Widely different stages of development exist contemporaneously, and even in the same individual. In society there are those living for high ideals and others whose life is pitched low. The savage or undeveloped nature is found everywhere. The world's greatest work, the process of development and education, is now on.

Many of the problems of the parent, criminologist, and disciplinarian require an evolutionary explanation. Crime and imperfection grow with roots deep in the history of the past. Ages of bloody competition bred an instinct to kill, which, released by passion, impels the murderer. The instinct to kill animals, which is still strong, was developed by ages of nomadic, precarious life, when the unskilful hunter starved and sympathy would have cost its possessor his life. Instinctive self-defense often leads to extempore false statements that second thought regrets. Ages of competition for mates have adorned woman with beauty and deformed her with jealousy. No one can wisely guide the young who does not know the natural causes of those various

phenomena in human psychology and conduct which were once regarded as instigated by the caprice and astounding versatility of the devil. There is no unexplainable conduct.

Children are natural. That is to say, they are as they are made. How are they made? Many thousands of years of ancestry, almost all sub-civilized variations sometimes favorable, sometimes not; post-natal development according to inner dispositions, and some education—these are the forces combined in every personality.

The teacher wants order. Why, the boy never was in disorder till he came to school or his father wanted him to do a certain thing! If you leave a boy to himself he will be in perfect order. He has an order, a law for himself; it is the order of the boy world. In fact one cannot be in disorder if left alone. There is no such thing as disorder till one system of order comes into conflict with another. Only when the teacher's system attempts to supersede the order system of the boy does disorder arise. The teacher's order system is an innovation.

There is discomfort, surprise, perhaps rebellion.

How can the late-born order of civilization, society, and school be imposed on the growing energies of this descendant of thousands of savages, and the pride of a father who with unsuspected implications says Clayton is a chip of the old block ?

CHAPTER II

WHAT GOOD ORDER IS

There are wrong ideas of what constitutes good order in the school-room. Silence is not order, nor is noise disorder. Teachers often use up their nerve force in vain attempts to do away with sounds in school. It is true that a well-controlled body of pupils will not create a bedlam of noise, but equally true that a working school-room will not be noiseless. Do not set up the unwise and impossible ideal of unbroken quiet. Only unnecessary and disturbing noise is a breach of order. How foolish to declare a general rule against whispering! Do not carpenters talk, whistle, and sing as they toil? Do not all kinds of good doers cease to be awkward and noiseless when they get at their work? There is an abandon of industry that a wise teacher delights in more than in the rigidity of the ninety and nine that never went astray. The proper control

of pupils has no place for mere repression. There are teachers whose definition of an orderly student would fit only a corpse.

A teacher may succeed in securing the observance of rules and the semblance of order and yet essentially fail in control. Control that does not encourage inner development, but merely stamps the individual with external marks of good behavior, is not successful. Of what value is it to enforce a rule that a boy shall not smoke, if the rule breeds an abnormal desire to experiment with tobacco and arouses a lust of spite that will be gratified at the first opportunity? The trouble with rules is that they train hypocrites, suggest offenses and make them attractive, and identify in the boy's mind lawlessness with independence and manhood. There are petty individuals who think a school is not controlled properly if anyone acts naturally, and who prepare young men and women for the great busy world by discouraging them in every effort to manage themselves during the period of educational incubation.

A book of humor could be made of selec-

tions from school and college rules still in effect. One college recently was solemnly attempting to enforce rules of which the following are examples:

No walking beyond certain limits.

Young ladies not allowed to go to the postoffice without an escort from the faculty.

No criticism of teachers allowed on pain of expulsion.

All letters of girls to be placed in a little tin box for inspection for danger signs.

No student to be out after nine-thirty P. M.

Young ladies not allowed to play basketball out of doors. (They wore bloomers.)

Others might be quoted showing equally well a stout belief in original sin and reform by mortifying the flesh.

The repressed person when at last set free is little prepared to conduct himself temperately and wisely. A very little spiritual expansion and self-mastery, even at the cost of a few joltings, are worth more than uniformity and propriety secured by repressive regulations. Liberty is usually a state of order. When pupils are given wide liberty,

occasional infractions of necessary regulations are few and unimportant compared with the disorder and growling rebellion that are sure to follow when liberty is denied.

Rules irritate because they inevitably forbid acts not always wrong. It is far better to suggest what is desirable under the circumstances, improvising a rule for the occasion, than to set up requirements that never quite fit and that exasperate well-meaning pupils. A little direction now and then, a practice is initiated, imitation follows, and soon the school has formed a habit, the most comfortable way of procedure. A wise teacher does not publish set laws and declare his rule; he rules through pupils.

A state of order is marked by absence of tension; everybody is comfortable. There is a spirit of industry; everybody is busy. When a definite common object is sought, a group becomes self-regulating. To build a bridge, play a game or conduct a club, persons unite their efforts for the joint enterprise, and under ordinary circumstances

the correlated individuals exhibit what in schools passes as order. When the teacher has thrown into prominence the objects of school and pupils are socialized for study, recitation, and other essential aims, they are unconsciously drawn into harmony, and disorder and interference with the vital conditions of the organization are not likely to occur. That disposition of persons and affairs in school which results from the seeking of common ends of itself constitutes order.

Order is only a means to an end. It exists in schools to promote study and the profitable employment of time. Any system of discipline that consorts well with application to study, economy of time, general comfort, and improvement is a good system.

CHAPTER III

QUESTIONS NOT OF DISCIPLINE

The discipline of a school is made easier by attention to certain conditions which react upon the conduct of pupils. Good air is an aid in discipline. Poor ventilation, uncomfortable seats, and too long occupation without change or rest are responsible for much irritability and disturbance. The physical condition of pupils is closely related to their behavior. Bodily conditions produce mental states. Cheerfulness, courtesy, obedience and loyalty are most likely to characterize pupils whose digestion is good, vision perfect, and whose muscles are properly exercised. Overwork, lack of sleep, aches and pains make the teacher disagreeable, why should they not the pupils?

A teacher observant of special conditions will be prepared for the rational solution of many seeming problems of discipline. What would you think of a pupil who sat

all the afternoon with his book bottom side up, and between pretended attempts to study spent his time in visiting? Deserves severe punishment, doesn't he? No. His eyes are inflamed and painful and if you had his troubles you would commit crime. A boy is surly, disrespectful, loutish and is an "awful trial"; he doesn't respond. But perhaps he responded at four o'clock in the morning to the call of a penurious and savage step-father, and comes to school with poor clothes retaining undetachable cow-stable odors that pain his sensitive nature like fire on the skin. Respond! Children have been known to bear silently for months reproach as dunces when through near-sightedness they were not able to read display type on a blackboard six feet away. A teacher whose specialty is rigorous discipline should never inquire closely into the circumstances of pupils causing trouble; otherwise he would melt in pity and he wouldn't be a "disciplinarian" any more.

A teacher should not expect attention from pupils under circumstances such that adults would not give attention. Dreary,

lifeless, prosaic instruction naturally makes a class inattentive and restless. A wise public speaker who sees his audience sliding away from him, changes his tactics or stops. Under similar circumstances some teachers upbraid their audience. It is unwise to expect students to hear without self-defence a kind of discussion that would lose one the audience of adults if unconfined. A yawning, disorderly class is usually a reflection upon the teacher or his methods. A good disciplinarian must be a good teacher. There is more need of a study of the art of securing attention than of devices of discipline. An ingenious presentation of a subject is better than reproof. When pupils lose interest in what is going on in class they naturally turn to any possible diversion for occupation. Whose fault is it?

Lack of employment leads to disorder. To make a disorderly boy orderly, give him work, prod him with questions, suggest new ideas to work out, give him errands, send him out to measure the grounds. A boy is like a bicycle; the faster it is made to go,

the more easily the rider keeps it straight.

A few friendly suggestions frequently avail for order. Enthusiastic confusion prevailed in one school-room. It was suggested to the teacher that she recognize only one pupil at a time, hear him through, discouraging all interruptions, no matter how many heads were full of correct answers. Soon the pupils saw the fairness and desirability of giving one speaker the floor and waiting for one's turn to speak. The teacher was relieved and the pupils pleased. Good manners recommend themselves, once introduced.

CHAPTER IV

A GOOD DISCIPLINARIAN

We are both born and made. Conduct is traceable to inner tendencies and to acquired ideas. Offensive ways or unwise practices may often be traced to an acquired idea. Change the idea and you change conduct, change character. The ability to discipline pupils successfully is both born and acquired. A natural disciplinarian may improve or through carelessness degenerate. A person without natural ability may acquire a skill in controlling others that closely resembles the congenital talent. There is hope for the teacher who does not recall with satisfaction the discipline of his first school. No one need give up. Perhaps a change in conceptions, perhaps a little guarding of inner tendencies will reduce friction and beget a merited reputation for excellence in discipline.

To discipline is to obtain desired conduct

through the exercise of influence over others. There is such a thing as psychic compulsion. Some real or imputed superiority creates deference and a willingness to be guided. A bearing and tone of authority are effectual in the control of others. Soldiers within the enemy's lines have made their escape by assuming authority and giving preposterous orders. When a person acts as if he had the right to command, the inference is that he has that right. Few ever stop to investigate a claim of this character. The instincts of the human race conform easily to leadership. Most people enjoy domination by superiors in strength. Was not one of Napoleon's marshals delirious with joy when his master boxed his ears? Ages of the arbitrary rule of despots, priests, nobles, warriors, aristocrats, and rich men have trained mankind to habits of obedience and easy self-effacement. Superiority, be it declared by whispered rumors, mystery and inscrutability, prestige of dress, degrees and decorations, actual demonstration, printer's ink or self-assertion—even its semblance, is a sufficient

warrant for power over persons not sure of themselves nor thoroughly rationalized, of whom, alas, the world is full.

Knowledge is a source of awe and obedience. For ages the learned man,—poor empty head he might be—was looked upon as a preternatural being in league like Dr. Faustus with the powers that control the world. Knowledge was a mystery. Its possessor bore enchantments. Pupils have an awe of learning and feel embarrassed in the presence of superior wisdom. Knowledge controls ignorance. A well-educated teacher unconsciously exerts authority over pupils; before him they are self-conscious, cautious, and suffer a trepidation that testifies to their feeling of inferiority in knowledge and susceptibility to their control. A teacher whose learning is always a little deeper in the mystery of things and unexpectedly applicable to strange questions is sure to be worshiped in a way.

The unknown is awe-inspiring. A teacher just a little mysterious and unknowable will have far less difficulty than one whose volubility in self-explanation leaves nothing

to wonder at, keeps back much. Self-poise and residual inscrutability are qualities of leaders. Silence is powerful. A score of tentative presumptions will be made and a hundred queries arise if you do not explain yourself and announce every policy. Suggestions of hidden resources and reserve strength reinforce authority. While people are guessing, they are complimenting you; you are interesting them. Babble and the spell is broken. The silent man wins. You see a well-dressed worthy-looking stranger. You do not know that he is not a college graduate, a musician, a poet, a traveller, and a millionaire. Involuntarily you clothe him with excellencies. He explains. He has had no education, does not know a tune, never read Shakspeare, never was out of the State and after successive commercial failures is trying to borrow money to start a business college. The mystery is dispelled. He is reduced to the ranks. Beware of too much self-dissection, it hinders success and weakens influence. No one is interested in the obvious and familiar. Everyone enjoys discovery. It is not neces-

sary to ward off possible favorable judgments; better deserve them.

Volubility in the teacher is disorder and produces disorder in pupils. A quiet manner and careful, deliberate speech will be imitated. A glance or slight gesture will often serve better than many words. People usually express unimportant thoughts in loud tones. A low voice commands attention. Instead of raising the voice to secure attention, lower it and say little.

A good disciplinarian will respect his own personality. To secure the good graces of pupils it is not necessary for a teacher of thirty-five to act like a child of twelve and play tag on the school-ground. Children have standards of behavior for different ages, and easily detect inappropriate antics. A teacher of thirty-five will be most popular by remaining adult in bearing, neither exhibiting unnatural stiffness nor affecting unbecoming juvenility.

In counsel be practical. Very little good is done by preaching abstract morality to concrete offenders. Tell the boy what to do under the circumstances; it will help

him more than a maxim the application of which would confuse a casuist. Never tell a boy not to strike back. Grown people do not observe that rule. The judiciary exists to help people strike back. Besides a boy has a reputation to sustain among his fellows, who would unbearably jeer him for peculiarity or supposed cowardice. It is not wise to affect unearthly goodness in dealing with boys; they lose confidence in you, doubting the value of your experience and advice. Without hypocrisy or surprise discuss and settle in a practical way issues and cases.

A teacher gains nothing by being too obliging. Let children bear a reasonable part of their own troubles. Children lose respect for a person whose own affairs are not of sufficient importance to require close attention. A teacher who is obtrusively obliging will be thought weak and will be imposed on.

The teacher needs more tact than a politician. That wisdom which instantly sees the way out of difficulty and avoids pitched battles is worth more than diplomas. Pu-

pils often do not object to doing a thing, but object because of the way the subject is presented, perhaps the publicity of a suggestion. Only in rare cases should pupils be reproved or exhorted before the school. Rowland is fidgeting in the back seat. A quiet and pleasant request as the teacher, apparently without design, passes his seat, will be complied with good-naturedly, whereas if Rowland were yelled at from the platform he would be irritated by the notoriety and make trouble from principle, while the school would be temporarily distracted.

A teacher should be good-looking. That is, have a good-looking soul. If one has a pleasant disposition, is honest, benevolent, and fair-minded, the good-looking soul will come through any kind of features and create beauty. By the goodness that creates beauty are meant altruistic activity and radiation, not private scourgings nor petrifed decorum, which are far from beautifying.

The crowning quality is fairness. A good disciplinarian is not an autocrat nor a mule.

He is a reasoning, sane, judicious, quiet, probably ungladiatorial person, perfectly

willing to acknowledge mistakes, not loudly insisting on technicalities, nor boring pupils with useless regulations which are enforced chiefly to prove his authority. He controls without anger or noise and decides without resentment or prejudice.

There is more to be said. A ruler of men hides in his soul a power that other men know exists. Is it daring? Is it the certainty of an unshakable resolution? Does it call to mind the unquivering pose and proud sneering of Cambronne before aimed rifles in the dusk of Waterloo? Is it a suggestion of the careless grandeur of heroes who toss away life in sacrifice to will? There is a power that collects every energy of soul and body for a single throw, reckless of life or limb—that is the power.

CHAPTER V

THE DISCIPLINED

Every individual seeks to express himself. Self-expression sometimes takes objectionable forms, as eccentricity, disorder, crime. Vanity or egotism leads to efforts to attract attention and monopolize applause. Many a boy's disorder arises from his desire to show off or establish his pre-eminence among his fellows. Turned toward proper ends the crudest egotism is valuable motive power. Boys eager to excel are prone to offend by choosing objectionable paths to fame, but the troublesome, high-spirited, spectacular boy is full of promise.

There is a little world within every school-room, a miniature of universal society. A school-room is a bit of the world enclosed. Each member has his competitions, points of pride, social obligations, and desires to communicate his thoughts and give sage counsel.

How does this little world regard the teacher? Sometimes as a policeman to be avoided; sometimes as an enemy seeking to make anarchy in boy and girl society; sometimes as an older, wiser, and friendly power, wonderfully sympathetic and miraculously disposed to be of assistance. Of course before the teacher's attitude is known there is some scientific curiosity and experimentation, but a teacher with tact and good-humor will soon be favorably classified.

Pupils take advantage of a teacher who shows himself easily irritated; it becomes an interesting diversion to stir him up; few can resist the temptation to contribute to his embarrassment. Lack of self-control is weakness, and in crude societies weakness invites attack. If some one is making a disagreeable noise the excitable teacher gets angry and talks; the offender takes up the challenge to the game of wits and continues to annoy. A shrewd and self-controlled teacher would seem undisturbed and would soon have the offender located through his over-confidence.

Pupils are exasperated by being treated

in a way unbecoming their years and sensitive dignity. Sometimes their intelligence is insulted by unnecessary repetitions and stale cautions. One teacher became a by-word by her stereotyped query, "Do you understand?"

Few school-room offences are really serious. Ignorance and thoughtlessness are the cause of many. A boy cuts a desk thoughtlessly. He throws coal out of a window "just for fun", taking as a target a poor woman's roof. When all the phases of the act are pointed out the thoughtless lad is ready to make amends. It was not a bad act, only unfunny boys' fun due to the enthusiasm of discovery and spread by contagion. It is unfortunate to take youthful pranks too seriously. The intent is important rather than results. There are surprisingly few wanton and malicious offences.

While general remarks on discipline apply both to boys and girls, there are minor but important distinctions. The more orderly and studious nature of girls usually makes their control easier. The typical boy's bold, sceptical, and restless nature, the com-

posite, it may be, of Teutonic barbarism, Viking, Elizabethan pirate, and Cromwellian foot-soldier, is in present as well as historical contrast with girl character, whose traits, quiet and cautious, trace ancestry through ages of protestion and seclusion, ages of castle-bolts, face veils and body-swathing, ages of intellectual repression and exemption from physical strife. Instinctive obedience, keen sensibilities which exaggerate the fear of punishment, lack of inventiveness and habitual conservatism unite to make the normal feminine type readily amenable to discipline. At the present stage of development woman illustrates the governability of the ruled class in despotisms while man generally exemplifies the independence and self-sufficiency of the political unit in modern democracy.

Discernment on the part of the teacher is made necessary by the fact that there is often among girls pronounced evasion and indirectness. Untold generations of women have been forced to dissemble and deceive, putting tact and cunning against brute and

savage force or adroit rivalry. Moreover in the competitions of past ages for food, mates, and other advantages, while man's weapons were largely external and mechanical, woman's were mental and strategic. There are distinct traces of these early conditions in the tendencies of men and women to-day, and though men are less given than formerly to using spear, club, and fist, they nevertheless very likely practise more than women open and fair fighting and make direct attacks. A boy is more given to overt offences and flat refusals. His face reveals his feelings. A girl will often smile when covertly resentful and look interested when sadly bored.

Nature is obliging. A young tree will grow straight at a suggestion, that is, a prop. A pupil's tendency is often neither upward nor downward, but merely on a level in the line of the least resistance, the most attractive path. Show the pupil the desirability of certain conduct and often he will grow straight and remember

with gratitude the day when a reasonable and sympathetic teacher pointed out to him in ignorance the best things in life.

CHAPTER VI

FORMS OF CONTROL

The lowest form of control is physical. It applies to the lowest orders of intelligence. The explorer Stanley says it was necessary in dealing with certain African tribes to rely upon physical force because they could understand no other means and suspected weakness and cowardice where there was not a show of strength. With lower animals it is well-known that force is the usual method of discipline. A fractious horse is corrected by whip and rein, not by persuasion, argumentation and exposition. It is unwise to meet a mad bull with reproachful glances or sympathetic assurances—a pitchfork is better. The bull does not stop to see psychic compulsion in the eye of the trespasser in the pasture; he sees only a jointed, bifurcated object with a red necktie and makes a dash at it. One defends himself from savage animals and savages by force.

Only in the higher stages of human development can one safely rely on other means. Individuals may retain enough primitive obtuseness of mind, dullness of sense of obligation, lack of imagination and sensibility to necessitate resort to physical force. Accordingly restraint is imposed by prisons and policemen and bodily punishment inflicted. In cases of irrationality, appeals to intelligence failing, the body is the only alternative.

Generally throughout society and almost entirely in schools, physical force has been superseded by other forms of control. There would not be enough policemen and soldiers in the world to keep society in order if it were not largely self-control. Our army and constabulary are organized and prison space arranged for upon the assumption that only a few out of thousands will ever require coercion. The civil war in America, caused by a breach of constitutional discipline in the South, showed how little prepared is State or nation to cope by physical force with an extensive rebellion.

Control by physical force is the least

effectual of forms of control because it must be confined to overt acts and therefore fails to reach large classes of offences. It is largely negative; for while inhibiting acts it is rarely available to initiate good conduct. It does not go to the sources from which acts spring. Physical force speaking through law requires that no one shall push another into a river, but the penal code cannot require that one shall pull out of a river a person already in. Moreover, government by physical force is expensive. It takes several strong men to compel one to do an act which a motive would effectuate unassisted.

While physical force is not actively controlling society, it nevertheless stands in the background as a final resort. In case other means fail, authority must resort to sword, powder, club, fist, or switch; or abdicate. A squeamishness and affectation of refinement which absolutely deny the teacher the right to punish are as unscientific as legislation to make water run up hill.

A teacher has a legal right to punish a disobedient pupil, but public sentiment

makes the exercise of that right of doubtful wisdom in most cases. For prudential reasons it is well to avoid as much as possible the infliction of corporal punishment. No teacher should punish except in moderation and as a last resort. No one else is likely to see an offence with the anger a teacher may feel.

Pupil organizations—particularly boy organizations, for girls are deficient in organizing capacity and group cohesion—maintain order, and discipline individuals members. A school baseball team rarely disintegrates till the season is over; its vital rules are strictly enforced. The means of discipline employed by small groups are usually merely the compulsion of group opinion, with possible ostracism. The teacher's success is inevitable if he can direct the social instincts of pupils in favor of school interests. If pupils can be brought to see that their interests are linked with the interests of the school management they will exercise their group opinion for order and will of themselves bring into submission evil-disposed associates. One frequently sees a

group of busy students turn upon and quell a noisy member. The great problem of the teacher is to secure cohesion of the student body for order and the general objects he is promoting. Let me illustrate the utilization of school opinion. A teacher makes the return of a pupil who has been excused from the room a condition precedent to the absence of a second pupil. No one objects to this arrangement. A student who remains out of the room an undue time infringes on the rights of others and will be severely dealt with by his fellows, while the teacher, entirely relieved of the work of discipline, looks on merely as a spectator. The teacher's point is gained if offences against his rule are made to appear as offences against the interests of the whole school, as they are.

A pupil who in evil-doing has the support of his fellows is proof against the efforts of the teacher, but if denounced by his social class speedily conforms to requirements. If a school takes pride in the appearance of the building and grounds, no disciplinarian is needed to punish defacement; for the

school society will wither the offender with collective scorn, the bitterest form of punishment.

In directing the public opinion of the school-room it is well to work through leaders. Two or three influential pupils, enlisted in behalf of the management, will popularize policies and secure informal student legislation. Unobtrusive methods of control and the delegation of government to the school serve to identify interests of teacher and pupils. The school should be given frequent opportunities to decide upon policies. Every well-managed school is largely under student government in fact, whether nominally or not.

Difficulty is often experienced through the loyalty of a pupil to his fellows in a clique. A boy's obligations to his clan often forbid his disclosing evidence. He will offend the teacher and suffer punishment rather than offend his mates. Well-meaning boys acting with a majority or following leaders are drawn into irregular conduct through the spirit of fellowship and fear of ridicule. A skating party returns late to

school. What does it mean? Perhaps that one boy challenged another to stay over time, and the rank and file remained through social attraction. All march in together appearing equally at fault and are prepared to stand by one another. In such a case a little rational exposition by the teacher is better than general denunciation. It is not wise to attempt to make pupils break all clan bonds; it is better to approve loyalty and enlist it in the larger interests of the school.

The forms of control already spoken of, government by physical force, actual or threatened, and by group opinion, are lower in class than self-control. The sense of moral obligation, reasoned conduct, and spontaneous well-doing are subjective disciplinary forces of superlative value in society and the foundation of good character. All that is required in dealing with the self-disciplined is tact, fairness, and mutual understanding.

Fortunately subjective control widely prevails in society and school. Usually no appeal need be made to the objective control of group opinion or physical force. From

the better nature may be evoked deep, altruistic forces which have been accumulating in the race since mothers first loved babes and warriors fought in bands, forces which in the ascent of man are ever gaining new strength. Before the walls of Rome, embittered Coriolanus yielded to the entreaties of mother, wife and child. Few can withstand the call to look up and be better.

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CHAPTER VII

ONE TOUCH OF NATURE

It is necessary that the teacher have the power through imagination and recollection to feel and see from the pupil's standpoint. He must understand how matters look to the pupil. While it is always desirable to lead the pupil to higher planes of thought and suggest higher considerations, it is important to bear in mind his limitations. There is a "consciousness of kind" that removes most of the difficulties of school management. A pupil will do much for a teacher who seems to be the same kind of being as himself.

By looking at matters from the pupil's standpoint, the true character of various acts is ascertainable. It is possible through lack of like-thinking to see in the merest trifles the intent to give offence and overthrow authority. What does a scribbled personality on a blackboard mean? Per-

haps that some immature, amiable, and thoughtless boy has attempted to amuse by his originality and daring; merely perverted egotism. A good teacher should have a sufficiently good opinion of himself to act as a coat of mail for such attacks; oversensitiveness is not a virtue, particularly in this age. It would be a great mistake to fly into a rage and denounce the unidentified culprit. There is a quiet way of making everybody rather ashamed for the offender; gentle and delightful ridicule will serve. Bluster and fervid denunciation are merely entertainment.

Through sympathy the teacher is admitted to the student body, and is taken into their psychological groups and enjoys the benefit and protection of class instincts. Not in all ways can a teacher be in social parity with students; his maturity forbids. Pupils tell one another things they never tell any teacher. There are little eddies of socialization for pupils only. Yet by showing an interest in things that interest pupils, the teacher will be looked upon in many relations as a fellow in groups with which

otherwise he might stand in the relation of an alien with no security from hostilities.

In the interests of easy discipline a teacher may well assist in student enterprises and co-operate in special endeavors. Count Frontenac made himself popular with the Indians of Canada in colonial times by putting on Indian dress and war paint and dancing with them about their camp fires. Without making undue concessions, teachers will encourage and delight pupils by avowed sympathy and evidences of friendliness.

Discipline will be made easier by showing practical kindness and wisdom in dealing with pupils who may be poorly adjusted to courses of study. No one with slight remembrance of his own early struggles will require a worthy student to take a subject over and over before going on to others. Don't you remember how impossible it was for you at a certain age to master some study? Yet you could learn others easily and should not have been discouraged by the exception. Remember that early heart-sickness and sit down by the boy and clear

the atmosphere. Tell him of men who have succeeded in spite of incapacity in certain studies. Never mind the "regents". A wise talk by a discerning teacher may inspire a pupil who through misunderstanding himself might drift away in discouragement and resentment and die out of the life for which he is really fitted.

Dignity does not require that a teacher conceal his emotions and dehumanize himself. If anything funny occurs, laughter should not be discouraged. The early New England theory that laughter is improper should not be adhered to. It is well even to educate the sense of humor as occasion favors. What will be done with the boy who is always trying to start a laugh? One sensible woman said privately after class: "Merton, some of your jokes are good—some of them. If the joke is good we all want to hear it, but if it is bad it causes a waste of valuable time. So be careful not to try to say funny things unless they are really funny, and you must be judge of that." Merton, whose impulse to make others laugh was irresistible and might have

caused a tactless teacher no end of trouble, was impressed, chastened, and subdued, and made trouble for nobody.

It is the human touch that makes life worth living. Children are not mechanisms. Their happiness should be a distinct aim. It is more important that they should gain an optimistic and confident attitude than that they should acquire a few additional facts for possible future use.

CHAPTER VIII

THE BROAD MEANING OF CONTROL

What is the object of the control of pupils? Is it merely keep to them quiet during the hours of the school day? A clear conception of the broad aims of education will be valuable to the teacher disciplinarian.

Our public school system is a practical example of socialism. In the schools the state is conducting the education of its youthful citizens. Education, formerly a function of the family, has been entrusted to the public school teacher. The logical implication of the public support of schools is that the training and control of pupils should be of such character as to yield to the public at large the greatest return in social values: uprightness, rationality, industry, efficiency, and altruism. The public school must prepare for life; it does not perform its full duty by teaching arithmetic and geography, no matter how well taught.

Broader aims than merely technical and academic ones are the real business of teaching. A teacher may turn his school into an organization whose whole educational aim is the cramming for and passing of set examinations. Such a teacher actually betrays a public trust. A pedant loves to teach facts; a wise man and true teacher seeks to teach what facts mean and the use of knowledge, and to cultivate the love and quest of truth, using knowledge as a tool in shaping character.

Instruction and control must set up as their object the symmetrical individual and worthy citizen. The world is full of quarter men, half men, with some two-thirds men; there are few full men. Thousands yearly come from the schools deficient in self-control and characterized by disordered lives and looseness of purpose. For the benefit of society the teacher's duty is to encourage the self-control exhibited as self-restraint and shown in self-direction and adherence to purpose. Less attention to text-books and more to persons is desirable. In vicious addiction to the text-book mania teachers

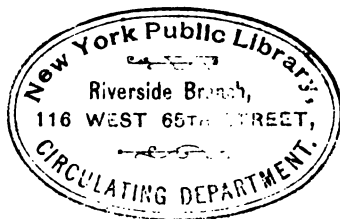
lose forever opportunities for revealing the significance of great truths and inculcating vital principles of conduct. As their full service in preparing for future usefulness teachers work overtime in drilling algebraic expressions into the minds of boys who leave school at fourteen to take part in a world of activity where the retention of ideas from mathematical puzzlement is of slight importance. Round-shouldered, impolite, inexact, purposeless, uninspired pupils, perhaps uninstructed in the elements of private morality, much less in broad social obligations, go in and out before teachers who with pedantic fatuity or from the fault of public system, see, hear and sense nothing but "examinations". Some day we shall be wiser and teach for the whole life instead of that part of life that is concerned with fruitless data and the use of difficult names for familiar ideas. We shall regard pupils not as intellectuality alone but personality as well. We shall teach not only how to know but how to be!

Intellectually the teacher's greatest duty is to teach the art of thinking. Is there

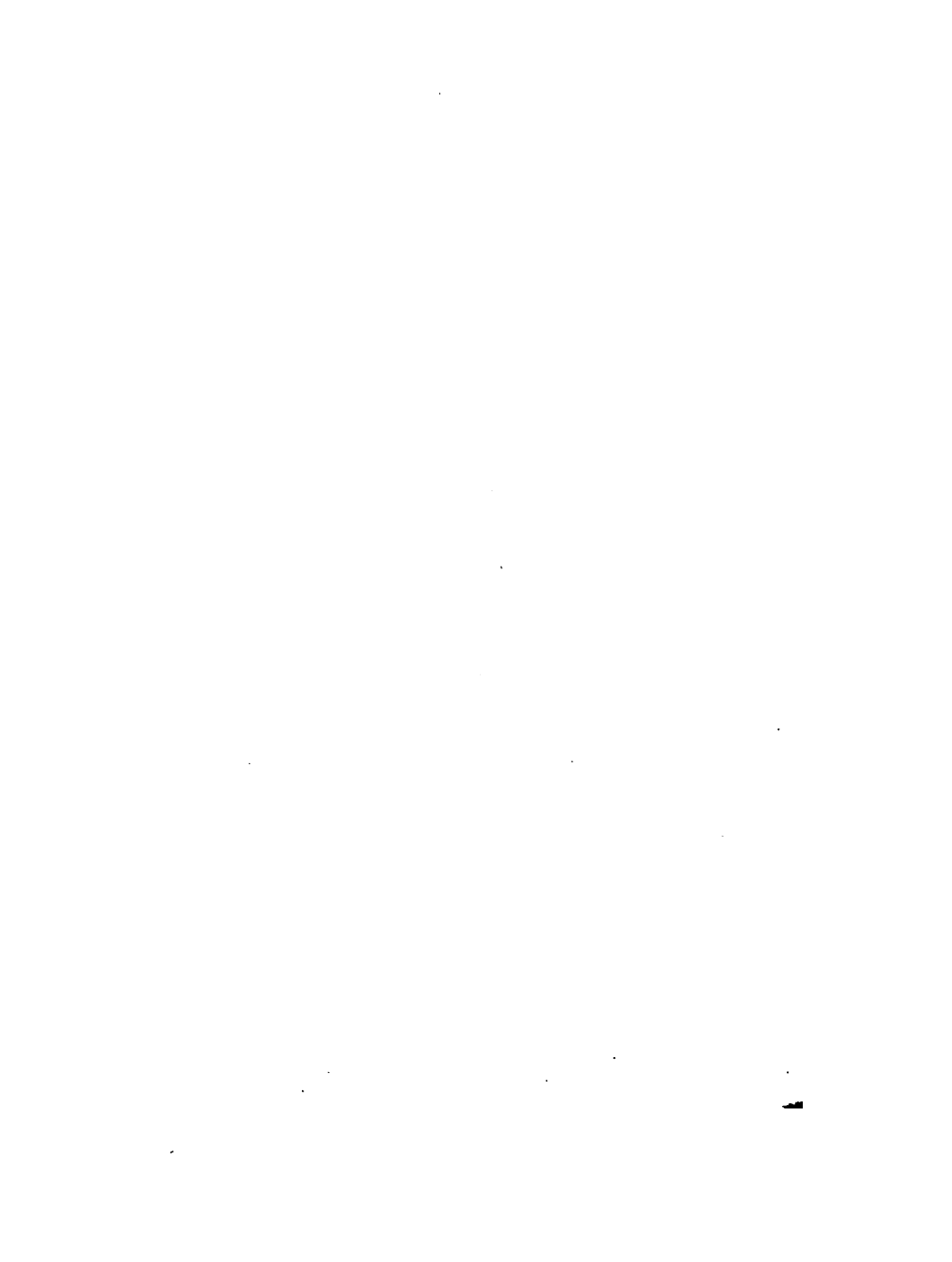
not sufficient evidence that there is need of this? There are thousands of people in the United States who believe the earth is flat, and millions who while believing the earth is round so believe on the same ground as those believing the earth is flat, namely, tradition. Is a man benighted because he doesn't keep up with tradition? It is a question whether the average public school pupil—that is, any one of ninety-eight out of a hundred—at the end of his course surpasses an untutored mind in making close, connected observations and drawing warranted inferences or has a greater desire for probing to the true meaning of things. It is doubtful if he will apply what is called knowledge with better results. It is undeniable that thousands do not seem to carry into later life vivifying interests developed in the school-room, and in susceptibility to tradition, prejudice, mob influence, and gullibility are not distinguishable from uneducated persons. Never did the world—still essentially mediæval in thought—need more than now clear-thinking, initiative, individuality, and that open-

ness of mind which makes a century of progress the possibility of a day. There is possible a comprehensive education that will regenerate society and incidentally make discipline a matter of mere suggestion. The first object of education is not knowledge, but character, intellectual and moral.

The schools are able to contribute vastly to the welfare of society by educating for self-control and training the interpreting powers. Graduation should mean the beginning of life expansion and growing insight, and the order of school rooms commend itself as an ultimate ideal of society.



“ It may be laid down as a universal rule
that a government which attempts more
than it ought will perform less.”—*Macaulay*.





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